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PICTURE TALES FROM THE ITALIAN

By FLORENCE BOTSFORD

With Thirty-one Illustrations in
Black-and-White by
GRACE GILKISON

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To
MY CHILDREN

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FOREWORD

Dear Children,

The stories in this book have been told to the boys and girls of Italy for many years. These children do not speak English, yet if you overheard their tales you would know what they were about because Italians talk with their hands, eyes and every motion of their body.

I first heard of "Madame Teeny Tiny" (*Madama Piccinina*) in the gardens of the Pincio in Rome. Beside me sat a little girl. Soon her nurse said, "*C'era una volta*," which means, "there was once upon a time." I listened, although I pretended to read a book, because Italians are often very shy. It is hard to get them to tell you stories which they think too childish for "grown-ups."

Soon I realized that the nurse was describing the very littlest of little women, for she pinched her thumb and forefinger together and squeezed her big, fat body down and spoke in a peeping voice.

They played finding the pennies. The little girl ran to the chair opposite, bought the food and wrapped it up in her handkerchief, just as the Italian cook does when she goes to market. They set the table and I heard, "buzz, buzz,"

and knew that the wicked old fly was eating the cheese. Then nurse got up and played she was the Judge. She looked so funny with her solemn face above her gay peasant costume and bright ribbons flying from her cap—that I nearly laughed out loud.

More "buzz, buzz." Would a fly alight on the Judge's nose? Yes, indeed! *Sicuro*! The little girl was now dancing with joy. Suddenly she reached up and gave nurse a smack on the nose and they burst out laughing and I laughed also. Then nurse and I turned into fierce soldiers and hunted under the chairs and bushes loudly calling—"Madama Piccinina!" We hauled the little girl out from under a flowering bush and nurse said, as they usually do after stories in Italy—"My story is done, now tell yours." (*Dite la vostra, chè ho detto la mia.*)

We exchanged tales until the evening bells rang the hour of Angelus over Rome and we realized that time passes quickly in stories. (*Il tempo della novelle passa presto.*)

These stories, and many more, I am translating into English so that you may share with me the happy hours spent in collecting folk tales in Italy.

F. H. B.

PICTURE TALES FROM THE ITALIAN

PICTURE TALES FROM THE ITALIAN

DONKEYS! DOGS! CATS! RATS!

Abruzzi

No one would ever believe that paper could make so much trouble, but it was just one piece of white paper that made donkeys hate dogs, dogs hate cats and cats hate rats.

It began long ago when donkeys could talk as well as hee-haw. And this is the way it happened.

A nobleman lived in a castle with only one servant, named Vigio. The Count was good and generous and each day gave Vigio a purse of silver to buy food for his donkey, dog, cat and rat. But Vigio was mean and stingy. He made the animals do all the work. The donkey reaped the harvest and carried the heavy burdens, the dog kept the house clean and the cat and rat did the cooking and raised the vegetables in the garden.

Vigio grew very rich because he kept the purse of silver for himself and, instead of buying food for the animals, he gave the donkey two thistles every Monday, the dog one bone on Wednesday, the cat one small sardine on Friday and the rat one grain of wheat on Saturday. And on Sunday Vigio gave all four a soup made of dried fleas.

At last the animals grew so weak and thin that they could stand it no longer. They sent the donkey to tell the Count that Vigio was starving them to death.

The Count was very angry and asked Vigio why he had not bought food with the purses of silver. Vigio only shrugged his shoulders and said:

"Noble Master, if you listen to what a donkey tells you, you will hear nothing but lies."

When Vigio had gone the donkey said, "Good Master, Vigio lies himself. You have but to look and you will see that I know everything because I have long ears; therefore what I tell you is the truth. Your dog can smell everything with his long nose, your cat can see everything with her sharp eyes, your rat can not only gnaw through a house but she can feel everything with her fine whiskers. Where else can you find servants to serve you so faithfully by

hearing, smell, sight, touch and taste? Are we not worthy of one good meal a day from the lying Vigio?"

"What you say is true, my good donkey," said the Count. "I will write an order on this paper. Whenever you want food, present the paper to my servant Vigio and he must give you what you need."

So the donkey took the paper straight to Vigio, who then had to give him a whole measure of corn and all the sweet grass he could eat.

But like many who have all they want, the donkey forgot his starving friends, the dog, the cat and the rat.

Now when the dog saw how easy it was for the donkey to get food, he asked to borrow the paper, and the stingy Vigio was obliged to give the dog a big piece of mutton. But as soon as the dog had plenty he forgot his friends, the cat and the rat.

When the cat saw the dog growing fat from over-eating she begged him to loan her the paper for just one meal. The mean Vigio had to give the cat a great feast of liver. But the cat ate up the liver and forgot her poor starving friend the rat. And when the rat began to cry with hunger, the cat said with a grand air, "Take this paper and get your own food."

When the rat had eaten a whole cheese, she tore up the paper into little bits to make a soft nest, down deep in her hole.

By this time the donkey was famished and asked the dog to return the paper. The dog demanded the paper of the cat, the cat asked it of the rat and the rat told them she had used the paper to make her nest. At this the cat was so angry that she sprang at the rat and ate her all up. The dog rushed at the cat and shook her until her tail nearly dropped off, and the donkey was so furious that he pinched and snapped and kicked at the dog until they both were nearly dead.

And ever since that time, donkeys hate dogs, dogs hate cats, and cats hate rats.

CORN FOR ITALY

Venetia

Once upon a time there were Three Crows flying back to Italy from Egypt. Two of them kept crying, CAW, CAW, CAW! just as loud as they could, but the third crow was silent. He was carrying in his beak a grain of corn which he had brought from Egypt; and if he opened his mouth to caw the corn would drop.

When they were flying over Sicily the Two Crows made a plan to get the grain of corn. They said,

"Look, Old Third Crow, look at those trees down below! From every branch hang green olives full of delicious oil. They are much better to eat than that piece of dried corn."

Old Third Crow looked at the trees and he was so eager to taste the olives that he nearly dropped the grain of corn, but he did not. He held on tight and the Two Crows screamed, CAW, CAW, CAW! in a great rage.

When they were flying over Tuscany the Two Crows said: "Look at these vineyards of fine grapes. Each grape is full of delicious juice." The Old Third Crow looked at the long rows of grapes. He was so thirsty that he nearly dropped his grain of corn but he did not. He held on tight and the Two Crows screamed, CAW, CAW, CAW! louder than ever, for it made them very angry that they could not get the grain of corn to eat.

When they reached Lombardy they saw dark green mulberry trees and the Two Crows said:

"Old Third Crow, if you fly down to those trees you will find many fat silkworms to eat."

Old Third Crow was so hungry that he thought he would stop and eat a few worms, but he feared to lose his grain of corn. So he held on tight and the Two Crows flapped their wings and cried, CAW, CAW, CAW! They were furious because they wanted the grain of corn to eat.

When they were flying over Venetia they saw a tall pine tree and on the topmost branch was a nest full of little baby crows hungrily crying, caw, caw, caw!

The Two Crows said, "Old Third Crow, how can you keep that grain of corn when you see those poor baby crows starving?"

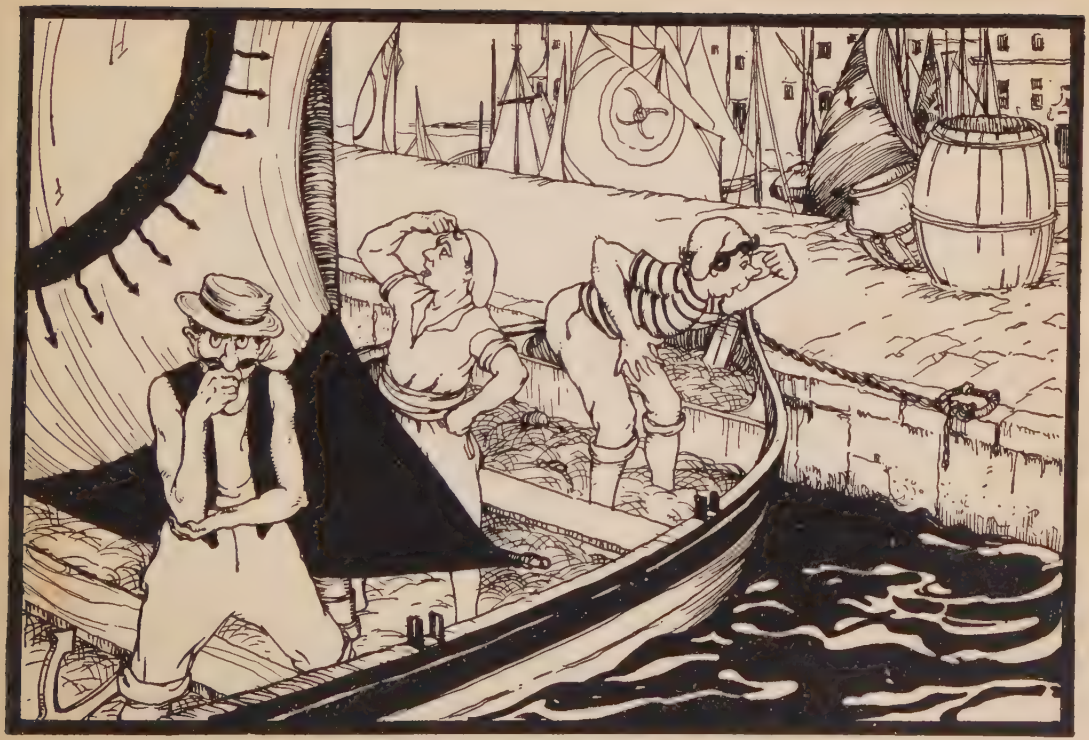
The Old Third Crow felt so sorry for the baby crows that he decided to drop his grain of corn into their nest.

So he opened his beak and it fell down, down, but just as it nearly reached the nest, the Two Crows dashed down and caught it. Then they began fighting to see which crow should have it to eat. First one would grab the grain of corn and then the other—and all the time they were screaming and screeching, CAW! CAW! CAW!

Because they were excited, they forgot to shut their beaks and the grain of corn fell so deep into the ground that they could not find it.

Then to the surprise of the crows the corn sprouted and spread into all the fields of Italy.

And this is how Italy got her corn.



THE FOOLISH FISHERMEN

Venetia-Gulia

In Trieste some fishermen were making their boat ready to go out to sea for a night's fishing. They pulled up the anchor, raised the sail and waited for the breeze to take them out to sea.

But the breeze did not blow, so the Captain said, "Let us row until the breeze comes to fill the sails." They all rowed and rowed but they did not move.

The Captain said, "You must row faster!" So they all rowed and rowed and rowed just as hard as ever they could, but still the boat did not move.

Then the Captain said, "There must be a witch on this boat, for we do not move, no matter how hard you row. Quick! Search the boat and drive the witch away!"

So they all hunted everywhere for the witch. They looked under the seats; they squinted up the sails; they searched the lockers; they climbed up the

masts; they turned over the oars and looked underneath. They hunted and hunted and hunted until one of the sailors peeped over the side of the boat and cried, "Look, Captain, look! We are still in Trieste!"

And there they were tied to the dock, for no one had thought to undo the rope!

THREE MOUNTAIN GOATS

Trentino

Once upon a time there was a father goat who had a long beard and two horns which curled over his ears. He was named Bo-Goat because he said, "Bo-oo-ooo!"

The mother goat had long white hair on her back and lovely brown eyes, and she was named Ba-Goat because she said, "Ba-aa-aaa!"

The baby goat was so fat that he could hardly walk and he was named Be-Goat because he cried, "Be-ee-eee!"

The father and mother loved little Be-Goat and taught him how to walk and what grasses to eat and that he must keep away from nettles and be careful not to go near men who carried guns that went BANG! And if he was good he would grow up and have long hair like his mother's and beautiful horns to curl over his ears like his father's.

One day when Be-Goat had grown so big that he could jump over the rocks,

he felt a pain in his head. He began to cry, "Ma-ma Ba-Goat, my head aches! Oh, dear me!"

And Mama Ba-Goat rubbed his head and felt his horns just beginning to grow. So she wrapped his head in soft wool. Father Bo-Goat brought him sweet grasses to eat and was very proud that his son was going to have nice curly horns.

And Be-Goat was very glad that he was no longer a baby. One morning when the mother and father goats were fast asleep, Be-Goat crept out of his warm bed and started down the mountain, tip-tap! tip-tap! tip-tap! He stopped beside a stream for a drink and a blackbird flew down and nipped the wool bandage off his head. Be-Goat began to cry, "Be-ee-eee! Be-ee-eee!" and the blackbird said,

"Cry-baby, cry! Run home to your mother!"

Be-Goat rubbed his new horns and said, "I am a big goat now, I must not cry." And he ran further down the mountain—tip-tap! tip-tap! tip-tap!

When evening came he was *so* tired and *so* hungry! He ate some nettles, which stung his mouth, and he jumped around and held out his tongue crying,

"Be-ee-eee! Be-ee-eee!" And at this very moment a man rushed out with a gun which went BANG!

Be-Goat was jumping around so fast that he was not hurt by the bang and he dashed up the mountain, tip-tap! tip-tap! tip-tap! and the man could not catch him.

All this time the father and mother goat were searching for their baby Be-Goat. Finally they heard him crying, "Be-ee-e-e-e!" far, far away, and old Bo-Goat said, "There is that naughty baby kid! If I catch him I will give him a good spanking for running away from home." And he started off down the mountain, clip-clap! clip-clap! clip-clap!

The mother Ba-Goat said, "I hear that naughty little goat. If I catch him I will put him to bed without his supper." And *she* started down the mountain, rip-rap! rip-rap! rip-rap!

At last they found Be-Goat. Old Father Bo-Goat was so glad to see his baby that he gave him only a gentle spanking that did not hurt much and the mother Ba-Goat was so happy that she gave him an extra good supper because Be-Goat promised that he would never run away from home again.

THE EAGLE AND THE OWL

The Marches

"Even a cock-roach in Naples thinks her babies the fairest."

There was once an eagle who was the king of all birds. He flew over mountains and valleys looking for little birds to eat.

One day he saw in the top of a tall pine tree the nest of a Mother Owl and in the nest were four eggs.

King Eagle stopped beside the nest and the Mother Owl said politely, "Good morning, King Eagle, I hope you are not very hungry?"

"Yes, I am!" said King Eagle. "And I am going to eat up your owlets just as soon as they are hatched."

"Oh, King Eagle!" said the Mother Owl, "if you will not eat my owlets I promise that ever after I will fly only at night, and I will eat the snakes and scorpions and leave the birds and mice for you, who fly by day."

"Very well," said King Eagle, "I promise not to eat your owlets. But how will I know them from other birds?"

"Oh, surely, you will know them because they will be the most beautiful birds in the world," said the Mother Owl.

King Eagle flew over the mountains searching for food with his sharp eyes. Soon he saw a nest in the top of a tall pine tree where four tiny white birds were fast asleep. He screamed for joy and rushed down to eat them up. But when he came to the nest the baby birds said, "Chee-eep! Chee-eep!" and looked so sweet that King Eagle

said to himself, "These must be Mother Owl's babies. I will not eat them."

Soon he saw another nest in the top of a tall tree and he swooped down and there, in the nest, were four of the ugliest little birds he had ever seen and they were screeching, "To-whoo! To-whoo! To-whoo!"

"Ha!" said King Eagle. "These ugly birds can not belong to Mother Owl." And he gobbled them up.

Just then Mother Owl flew down to her nest and began to cry, "To-whit, To-whoo! To-whit, To-whoo! To-whit! To-whoo-oo-O-O-OO! King Eagle, you have broken your promise. You have eaten up my owlets! Oh, what shall I do?"

"Excuse me!" said King Eagle. "You told me that your owlets were the most beautiful birds in the world—and those I ate were the ugliest little birds I have ever seen."

"To-whit! To-whoo! To-whit, To-whoo-oo-O-O-OO!" cried Mother Owl. "You are the King of Birds and you have not yet learned that *every* mother thinks her own children the most beautiful in the world!"

IL · NOSTRO · BAMBINO

Our Baby

This is the sail;
(The ear;)
This is the top-sail;
(The other ear;)
This is the lantern;
(The eye;)
This is the anchor;
(The other eye;)
This is the mast;
(The nose;)
And if the wind blows,
(Baby opens mouth,)
We sail into port.
(Baby is fed.)

GIACCO AND HIS BEAN

Tuscany

Once upon a time there was a little boy named Giacco who had no father or mother. The only food he had was a cup of beans. Each day he ate a bean, until finally there was only one left. So he put this bean into his pocket and walked until night. He saw a little house under a mulberry tree. Giacco knocked at the door. An old man came out and asked what he wanted.

"I have no father or mother," said Giacco. "And I have no food except this one bean."

"Poor boy," said the kind old man. He gave Giacco four mulberries to eat and let him sleep by the fire. During the night the bean rolled out of Giacco's pocket and the cat ate it up. When Giacco awoke, he cried, "Kind old man, your cat has eaten my bean. What shall I do?"

"You may take the cat," said the kind old man. "I do not want to keep such a wicked animal."

So Giacco took the cat and walked all day, until he came to a little house under a walnut tree. He knocked at the door. An old man came out and asked what he wanted.

"I have no father or mother," said Giacco. "And I have only this cat that ate the bean."

"*Too* bad!" said the kind old man. He gave Giacco three walnuts to eat and let him sleep in the dog kennel. During the night the dog ate up the cat, and when Giacco awoke, he cried, "Kind old man, your dog has eaten my cat!"

"You may take the dog," said the kind old man. "I do not want to keep such a mean brute."

So Giacco took the dog, and walked all day until he came to a little house under a fig tree. He knocked at the door. An old man came out and asked what he wanted.

"I have no father or mother," said Giacco. "I have only this dog that ate the cat that ate the bean."

"How very sad!" said the kind old man, and gave Giacco two figs to eat and let him sleep in the pig sty.

That night the pig ate up the dog, and when Giacco awoke he cried, "Kind old man, your pig has eaten up my dog!"

"You may take the pig," said the kind old man. "I do not care to keep such a disgusting creature."

So Giacco took the pig and walked all day until he came to a little house under a chestnut tree. He knocked at the door. An old man came out and asked what he wanted.

"I have no father or mother and only this pig that ate the dog that ate the cat that ate the bean," said Giacco.

"How pitiful!" said the kind old man, and gave Giacco one chestnut to eat, and let him sleep in the stable. During the night the horse ate up the pig and when Giacco awoke he cried, "Kind old man, your horse has eaten up my pig!"

"You may take the horse," said the kind old man. "I do not want to keep such a worthless beast." So Giacco rode away on the horse.

He rode all day until he came to a castle. He knocked at the gate and a voice cried, "Who is there?"

"It is Giacco. I have no father or mother and I have only this horse that ate the pig that ate the dog that ate the cat that ate the bean."

"Ha! Ha! Ha!" laughed the Soldier. "I will tell the King."

"Ha! Ha! Ho! Ho!" laughed the King. "Whoever heard of a bean that ate the dog that ate the cat that ate the pig that ate the horse."

"Excuse me, Your Majesty, it is just the other way around," said Giacco. "It was the horse that ate the pig that ate the dog that ate the cat that ate the bean."

"Ha! Ha! Ho! Ho!" laughed the King. "My mistake! Of course, it was the bean that ate the horse; no, I mean the horse that ate the bean; no, I mean—Ha! Ha! Ho! Ho!" laughed the King, and the knights began to laugh, and the ladies began to laugh, and the maids began to laugh, and the cooks began to laugh, and the bells began to ring, and the birds began to sing, and all the people in the kingdom laughed and sang, and the King came to the gate and said,

"Giacco, if you will tell me every day about the bean that ate the horse; I mean the horse that ate the bean; no, I mean the horse that ate the pig that ate the dog that ate the cat that ate the bean—Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ho! Ho! Ho! Ho! you shall sit on the throne beside me!"

So Giacco put on a golden crown and sat upon the throne, and every day he told about the horse that ate the pig that ate the dog that ate the cat that ate the bean, and everybody laughed and sang and lived happily ever after.

Ring Around Sandrine
(ring around the rosy)

Ring around and 'round O!
Bread and rolls are round O!
Roses we will bring
For our sweet Sandrine,
Ring around and 'round O!
We will all kneel down O!

SERAFINO AND THE FOUR WINDS

Campania (Naples)

Serafino owned a little red boat. One day he hoisted the red sail and raced out to sea to catch fish for his mother. He worked so hard to fill his net that he got tired and fell asleep.

The North Wind sprang out of a cloud screaming, "O-E! O-EE-O-EEE!" and blew Serafino up to the North Pole. When Serafino awoke he was nearly frozen. He saw a white bear sitting on an iceberg, looking at him.

"Where am I, Mr. Bear?" asked Serafino.

"You are in the kingdom of Boreas, the cruel North Wind," growled the Bear.

"Oh, Mr. Bear, I don't like the North Wind! I want to go ho-ho-home!"

"Where is your home?" howled the Bear.

"I live in Naples, where it is nice and warm. I caught these fish for my mo-mo-mother. I-I want to go ho-ho-home!" wept Serafino.

"Very well," whined the Bear. "If you will give me ten fish I will tell you how to escape from the rough North Wind."

Serafino counted, "1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10!" And when the bear had eaten them all he growled, "Call Notus, the South Wind to blow you home." So Serafino called "Blow, South Wind, blow! Home I must go!" and the South Wind came flying on dusky wings. He was covered with a long black robe and drove a flock of white clouds before him. When he blew, "E-YOU! E-YOU, E-YOU!" the clouds puffed and shifted like balloons in the sky. The boat raced so fast before the South Wind that Serafino thought he was going over the edge of the ocean.

He began to cry again, and a walrus rolled over and laid one of his flappers on the boat. Puffing out his moustache, he barked, "Why are you making so much noise, little boy?"

Serafino cried, "The South Wind won't let me take these f-f-fish home to my mo-mo-mother!"

"Is that all you are crying about?" yelped the Walrus. "If you will give me ten fish I will tell you how to escape from the fickle South Wind."

"I have already g-g-given the White B-b-bear ten f-f-fish." wept Serafino.

"Never mind," roared the Walrus. "You can give me those which come after ten." So Serafino counted, "11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20!" and when the Walrus had gulped them all down, he barked, "Call Eurus the mad East Wind to blow you home!" So Serafino called, "Blow, East Wind, blow! Home I must go!" and soon he heard the East Wind flying swiftly and crying, "WHEE-EE-EE! WHEE-EE-E-E-E!" But the East Wind wept so many tears that the boat filled with water, and just as it began to sink, down, down, down, Serafino saw a giant octopus swimming towards him.

"Help! Help! Mr. Octopus," he cried. "My boat is sinking!"

The Octopus seized the boat with four of his arms, and ladled out the water with the other four arms, and soon they were all right again.

"What are you doing so far from home?" snapped the Octopus.

"The we-we-weeping East Wind is bl-bl-blowing my boat away!" sobbed Serafino, "and I want to take these fi-fi-fish home to my mo-mo-mother!"

"If you will give me ten fish, I will tell you how to escape from the weeping East Wind," blubbered the Octopus.

"But I have given ten fish to the White Bear and ten fish to the Walrus, that makes tw-tw-twenty fish I have gi-gi-given away!" wept Serafino.

"Never mind," grumbled the Octopus, "you can give me the ten fish that come after twenty!"

So Serafino counted, "21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30!" and the Octopus caught the fish and stuffed them into his mouth. Then he snapped, "Call Zephyrus, the gentle West Wind to blow you home." So Serafino called, "Blow, West Wind, blow! Home I must go!" and the West Wind drifted towards Serafino, blowing sweet perfumes and calling softly, "WHO-OO-OO! WHO-OO-OO-O-O-O-O!" All the way home the West Wind played with Serafino and the boat danced along until they came to the shore where Serafino saw his dear mother waiting.

His mother was so glad to have her boy home again that she cooked long strings of macaroni. She fried pepper pods and the fish that Serafino brought back, in oil. She bought some slices of pink watermelon and they invited the West Wind to the feast, for the West Wind is the best friend of the fisher boy.

THE SELFISH ANT

Lombardy

Once upon a time there was an ant who thought of nothing but herself.

Besides being selfish she was as lazy as oil in water. She was so lazy that she would not feed the queen ant, nor help clean the ant-hill; and when she took the baby ants out in the sunshine she let them die from the heat. She really did nothing but gossip, or swing on a blade of grass; and when she got hungry she seized the honeydew which the worker ants were carrying home.

Besides being lazy and selfish, she was vain as a woman with red hair, and spent most of her time making her toilet. So the other ants drove her out of the colony and she was obliged to live all by herself.

She soon grew lonely and decided that she would get married. So after combing her head carefully with the comb on her leg, she started out through the long grass, in search of a husband.

The first person she met was a cricket who looked daring as an onion, with his long feelers sticking straight up in the air. So she said,

"Good morning, Mr. Cricket!"

The cricket was surprised at this, for ants usually run as fast as they can and speak to no one except ants, so he jumped behind a stone to look at her. He knew that ants bring wealth and thought perhaps she would help gather the leaves he needed to eat. So he began calling, "Gri-i-i! Gri-i-i!" in a tremulous serenade.

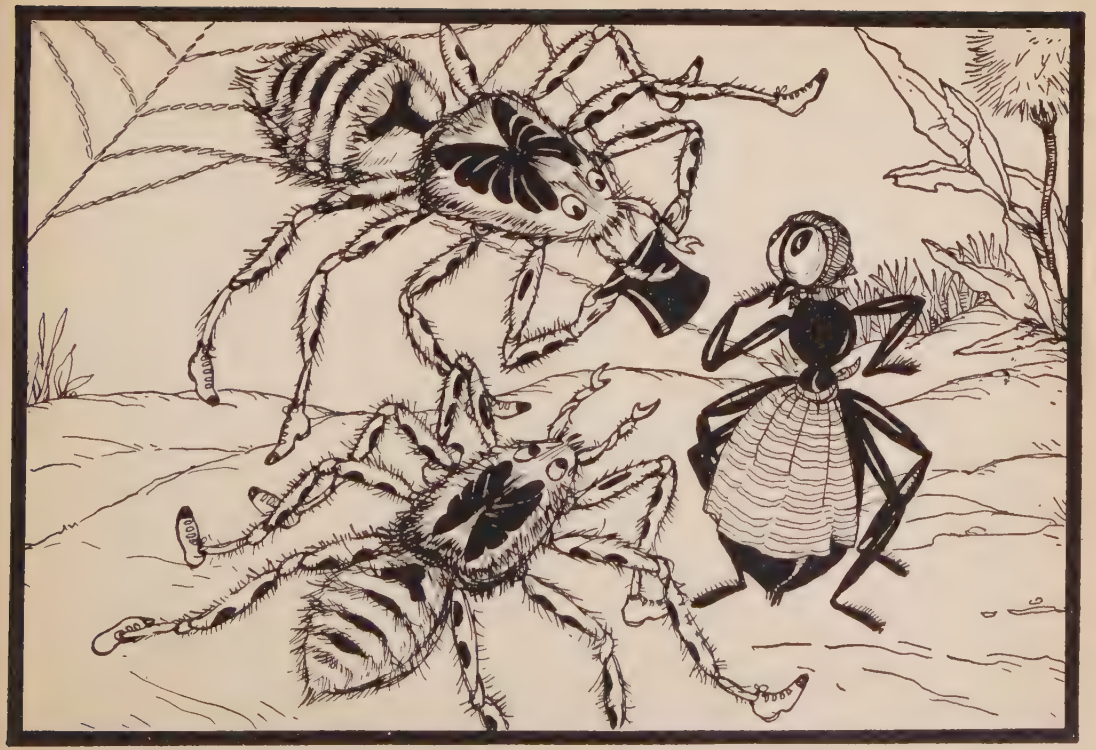
The ant was flattered by his attention and she dusted off her face with her foot and looked so lovely that the cricket said,

"Miss Ant, will you marry me?"

"Where do you live?" asked the ant.

"I live under this stone," answered the cricket.

"Humph!" said the ant. "I will not marry you, for you have no house." And leaving the cricket spitting molasses with rage, she hurried away through a lettuce bed and stumbled over a snail who was eating the baby leaves just sprouting out of the ground. He turned his head and looked at her through his eye-tipped horns.



Now the snail was very lazy and slow as a lead cat. He wanted some one to keep his house clean, so he said, "You did very well to refuse that foolish cricket, but if you will marry me you may live in the house I carry on my back."

As the ant had no idea of wabbling around on a snail's back she shook her little body with contempt and said, "No, I will not marry you, for you have no carriage."

She tossed her feelers over her head and ran down to the pond where a frog, as wet as a duck, sat on a lily pad. She was much pleased to see the frog staring at her and she stopped and began washing herself with her foot, which she moistened with her tongue. Soon she was so sweet and clean that the frog gave a jump and sat down beside her and trilled in a tender, hoarse voice, "Miss Ant, if you will marry me, and help catch juicy flies and insects, *I* will be your carriage."

But of course Miss Ant thought herself too fine to work or to leap around on a frog's back, so she looked at him haughtily with her black, beady eyes and said, "No, I will not marry you, for you have no horses."

"Certainly you could not marry that horny, green monster who is nothing

but a tadpole," said two handsome yellow spiders who dropped down from a tree. "If you will marry us we will let you ride on our silver threads."

Now the ant had no intention of being snapped up and eaten by spiders and she ran away as fast as her six legs could carry her, calling, "No, I will not marry you, for you have no whip!"

Just at this moment a grasshopper jumped out from behind a daisy and began beating her with his long legs. "Here," he said, "here is a whip for a selfish ant who wants too many things," and he drove her back to her ant-hill where she lived alone ever after. That is what she got for being too greedy.

The Snail

He hangs on my wall, but he is no saint.
He has two horns, but is not an ox.
He paints with dye, but is not a painter.
He carries a house, but cannot build.
My friend, what do you call him?

12248

THE LITTLE CREAM CHEESE

Emilia

Once upon a time there was a little girl named Matilda, who had nothing to eat. A peasant woman gave her a little cream cheese in a basket.

But Matilda did not like cream cheese. In fact she hated it so much that she would rather wash clothes in the river than take even one little taste.

So she made a crown out of long fern leaves and bound it around her head. She put the cheese in the crown and started to the mar-

ket-place to sell the little cream cheese.

As she was walking down the hill she thought, "Today I will go to the city and sell the cream cheese for a penny. With the penny I will buy two eggs. When the eggs are hatched I will have two chickens. When they grow big enough I will sell them and buy a lamb. When the lamb grows to be a big sheep I will sell it and buy a calf. When the calf is big and fat, I will sell it and buy a pony. When the pony grows to be a horse, I will sell it and buy a lovely castle with a nice balcony in the front.

"There I will sit in a comfort-

able chair, taking my ease, and all the neighbors will pass by and say, 'How do you do, Lady Matilda!'

"But I will not take the trouble to answer such common people. I will just make them a grand bow like this"—and as Matilda bent over to make a low bow, the little cream cheese fell in the mud, and that was the end of her castle in the air—and—and—and—wasn't she hungry!

THE DOG'S CLOCK

Basilicata

It is One o'clock—The dog barks.
It is Two o'clock—The dog gets out of bed.
It is Three o'clock—The dog brushes his hair.
It is Four o'clock—The dog sweeps the floor.
It is Five o'clock—The dog takes his umbrella.
It is Six o'clock—The dog goes to church.
It is Seven o'clock—The dog says his prayers.
It is Eight o'clock—The dog rings the bell.
It is Nine o'clock—The dog eats the soup.
It is Ten o'clock—The dog has a pain.
It is Eleven o'clock—Oh, dear! How sick he is.
It is Twelve o'clock—Poor Doggie!

THE WOMAN WHO HAD NO CHILDREN

Molise

There was once a woman named Maria who cried all the time because she had no children. One day a good Woman passed her door and said, "Why do you cry, Maria?"

"Because I have no children," Maria answered.

The good Woman said, "If you place a few handfuls of beans up the chimney you will have as many children as there are beans."

So Maria put ten handfuls of beans up the chimney and immediately so many children came tumbling down into the room that she began to cry harder than ever.

Then the good Woman came again and asked, "Why do you cry?"

Maria answered, "Now I have so many children that I cannot feed them. Besides, I do not want bean children!"

The good Woman said, "Take a broom and sweep all the children out of doors and they will turn into beans again."

So Maria swept all the children outside and they turned into beans. But one little child was sweeter than all the others, and he was clever as well, for he hid in a dark corner. When Maria looked around to see if she had missed any children she spied the little boy hiding in the dark corner. Maria lifted her broom to catch him and quick as a wink, he jumped up on the broom and cried,

"Do not sweep me out, dear Mother, and I will make you happy!"

"No, no!" scolded Maria, "I do not want a bean child in my house!"

"Dear Mother, if you will kiss me I will not turn into a bean again." So Maria kissed him, and ever afterwards she laughed for joy because she had a dear little boy for her very own son.

RICARDO

To Richard

I have lost my heart!
Is it with you?
If so, please have pity,
I have no heart
You have two!

MADAME TEENY TINY

Calabria

Madame Teeny Tiny lived in a little house of three rooms. Each room was made of one brick and Madame Teeny Tiny swept the rooms with a broom made of several hairs and washed the floors with a mop made of a few threads, and dusted with a cobweb.

One day while she was sweeping the bedroom she overturned a brick and there lay a penny! While she was washing the floor of the kitchen the brick came up and there lay another penny! And as she dusted the dining-room the brick turned over and there lay another penny! She had never seen so much money in all her life and she bought bread, wine and cheese with the three pennies.

When it was time for dinner she sèt the table with the loaf of bread, which was as big as the tip of your little finger; then she put on the cream cheese, which was as large as the head of a pin; and in the middle of the table she set

the flask of wine, which was as big as a doll's thimble. But when she got ready to eat, she found that a fly had eaten up the cheese! Just think how good that cheese must have tasted!

Madame Teeny Tiny was so angry that she rushed to the court-house and complained to the Judge about the fly.

Now the Judge was not only wise but he was very just and he was also very angry when he heard of the greedy conduct of the fly.

"Madame Teeny Tiny," he said, "you have suffered a terrible loss. Even I, a Judge, suffer when I think of that noble cheese being eaten by a mere fly! Take this staff and whenever you see a fly, I command you to strike and kill him on the spot!"

Just at this instant a fly alighted on the Judge's broad and comfortable nose. Madame Teeny Tiny dared not disobey the order of the court so she raised the Judge's staff and gave a mighty blow—Smack!—and smashed the fly! But alas! She not only killed the fly but she knocked the Judge's nose off upon the floor.

Now almost any person would have screamed with pain, or boiled with rage, to have a nose knocked off in this careless manner. But the Judge was

far too dignified. He merely stooped down, picked up his nose and clapped it on his face again. Then he put on his black cap and said:

"The Court has seen this woman kill a fly. She is guilty of a crime. I sentence her to prison for the rest of her life."

But before he had finished his sentence, Madame Teeny Tiny stole out of the court-room and ran home as fast as she could and hid under the brick in her dining-room. The soldiers searched and searched but to this day they have never been able to find Madame Teeny Tiny.

What Am I?

I am quick as a bird,
I cross the sea without a boat,
I climb mountains without a ladder,
I enter a house without knocking,
I eat with the King,
Doors cannot shut me out.
What am I?

(A fly!)

GABOTTU AND THE BEARS

Sardinia

Once upon a time there was a little boy whose name was Gabottu. He lived on the side of a mountain and watched his father's sheep. Each day he would lie on his back and play the pipes which he had made from the branch of an olive tree. Wild animals and even birds came to listen to the sweet music.

One day he played so long that he forgot the sheep and they wandered away into the mountains and no matter how hard he searched he could not find head nor tail of them nor hear their baa-baa-baa's.

Night came, the moon and the stars helped Gabottu search with their bright rays, but still he could not find the sheep and he dared not go home because his father would beat him for being so careless.

Suddenly Gabottu heard a roar and he was so frightened that he could not move. He saw two red eyes gleaming in the bushes and a gray bear

rushed out growling fiercely. Quick as a wink Gabottu snatched his pipes and began to play, for he remembered that all animals loved the sound of his music.

There was another frightful growl and a brown bear ran out. Gabottu's knees shook but he kept on playing. Then there was a terrific crash and a huge black bear jumped out and Gabottu turned and ran, playing his pipes furiously.

He ran and ran until finally he got so tired that he could hardly move. He stopped playing just for a tiny moment to look behind. There were the three bears on their hind legs, laughing and dancing,

and they looked so clumsy that Gabottu dropped his pipes and began to laugh, Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha!

At this the three bears stopped dancing and began to growl and show their long, white teeth and they said, "Why are you laughing, Gabottu?"

"Oh," said Gabottu, "you look so funny that I cannot help laughing."

"Ho, ho" howled the gray bear. "You certainly are not laughing at me, for I am a *perfectly beautiful* dancer and if you do not begin to play I will eat you up!"

"Ha!" growled the brown bear. "You certainly do not mean me, for I am an *extremely graceful* dancer and if you do not play I will eat up your jacket and trousers."

"Hum!" snarled the black bear. "Certainly you do not mean me, for I *dance just like a fairy queen* and if you do not play I will eat up your wooden shoes and your hat and the feather also!"

And they growled so dangerously that Gabottu began to play his pipes. He ran down the mountain with the bears dancing after.

When they came to his father's cabin Gabottu found that the sheep had come home by themselves and were asleep in the fold. His father politely invited the bears to come in and eat bread and honey and ever since that time bears have danced whenever they hear a shepherd's pipe.

To All Children

The weed, "I won't,"
Does not grow
In the King's garden.

THE LITTLE BUCKET

Apulia

Once there was a mother who had two little daughters, one was very, very good and the other was very, very naughty. One day the mother said to the naughty little girl, "Will you please fetch a bucket of water?" and the naughty little girl answered, "No, I won't."

Then the good little girl said, "*I* will get the water for you, dear Mother," and she started off to the well in the deep woods.

The naughty little girl stuck out her tongue at her sister and screamed at the top of her voice:

Goody, goody, sniffle nose,
Knock your head and stub your toes.

The good little girl walked so swiftly that she caught her toe on the well-curb and the bucket went bang, bang, bang, right down to the bottom. And when she leaned over, she hit her head so hard that it ached. She sat down

and cried, "Now what shall I do? I have lost the bucket! Oh, what will Mother say!"

She looked down into the well and saw the bucket floating around on the water, so she climbed down very carefully, but when she got to the water the bucket was gone. She sat down again and cried until a fish stuck out its head and said, "Little girl, if you don't stop crying you will make the water salt as brine and I cannot live in salt water."

"I hope you will excuse me," said the little girl, "but I have lost my bucket."

"Stop crying," said the fish, "and knock upon that white door and you will find your bucket."

When the good little girl knocked on the white door it flew open and within stood a beautiful lady in a glittering green dress who asked, "What do you want?"

"I have come to find my bucket," said the little girl.

"You must clean my house and make the fire and cook my supper and if you do these things very well you may have your bucket."

So the good little girl scrubbed and cleaned until her back ached and she lighted the fire and made the house nice and warm and cooked a fine supper. The beautiful lady in the green dress said,

"Here is the bucket, but do not look inside until you get home." And she kissed the good little girl on the forehead.

The good little girl hurried back to her mother and told what had happened and when they looked in the bucket it was filled with pearls and precious stones and on the forehead of the good little girl there shone a bright diamond.

Now the naughty little girl thought *she* would get a bucket full of treasures

also, so she snatched the bucket and ran to the well in the deep woods. The good little girl waved her hand to her sister and said,

Sister mine, sweet sister fair,
May you find the jewels rare.

The naughty little girl climbed down into the well. When she saw the fish swimming around she said, "Where is the door to the treasure room?" And the fish answered, "All fish are deaf, we cannot hear you."

"I'll make you hear," said the naughty little girl and she kicked at the fish and made such a noise that suddenly the white door opened and

the beautiful lady in the glittering green dress said sternly, "What do you want?"

"I have come to fill my bucket with jewels. Tell me where they are."

"If you clean my house I will give you your reward."

So the naughty little girl swept all the dust under the stove and put some cold food on the table and did not even try to build a fire. Then she said to the beautiful lady in the glittering green dress, "Quick, I want my bucket of jewels." And she snatched it and hurried home, and when they opened the bucket it was full of scorpions and toads and on her forehead lay a stone.

Then the naughty little girl was sorry that she had not tried to be good like her sister.

To Good Children

Fish are made to swim,
Birds are made to fly,
Boys and girls are made to laugh
And never, never cry.

GAROFANO*

Umbria

There was once a warrior named Garofano who was as tall as a cat's boot. He was the bravest plant in the garden because he carried a long, sharp, mouse-tail sword, and a bachelor button shield, and on his head he wore a Dandelion that roared loudly.

One day he was marching through the garden, feeling very strong, when he heard a Cicada screeching:

In the arbor grow grapes green,
Gru-gru-gru-gru, gri-gri-gri-gri!
Garofano bravest warrior seen,
Cinnamon, pepper, cloves and beans.

** Garofano is Italian for a clove.*

He's only a clove, so thin and lean.
Gru-gru-gru-gru, gri-gri-gri-gri.
Button and mouse-tail, lion mean,
Cinnamon, pepper, cloves and beans.

"What ho!" said Garofano. "Did somebody call me a clove? *I* will teach them what my name is!" And he clapped on his Dandelion hat and started to climb the grape-vine. The Dandelion roared so loud that the Cicadas screamed, "Run! Run! Garofano has a lion on his head!" They hid behind the grapes and Garofano could not find them.

"What ho! Cowardly insects," he cried. "The smallest beast makes the most noise. *I'll* teach you to call me a clove!" And he began to slash right and left, but his mouse-tail scampered off and his bachelor button rolled away and

when the Cicadas saw his plight, they advanced in hosts, singing:

Gru-gru-gru-gru! Gri-gri-gri-gri!
Cinnamon, pepper, cloves and beans.

And they rubbed Garofano between their wings, buzzing louder and louder:

He's only a clove, so thin and lean,
Gru-gru-gru-gru! Gri-gri-gri-gri!

until Garofano was nearly dead. He gasped, "Aie! Aie! My strength is gone!"

"Do not fear," said the Dandelion, and he turned into white down and floated Garofano gently to the ground, where together they hid under an artichoke, and the Cicadas were so disgusted not to find Garofano, that they buried themselves in the ground for seventeen years.

Why does the cock close his eyes when he crows?

Because he knows his song by heart.

ROMULUS AND REMUS

Latzio (Rome)

"Wow-ow-ow-ow!" mourned the Wolf as she ran to and fro from her cave. She was crying because her baby cubs were dead. "Wow-ow-ow-ow!" she howled and loped down to the river to drink. Under a fig tree she saw two strange-looking cubs and she stopped to sniff at them. She touched them carefully with her rough paws and turned them about. They were warm and pink and so soft that she licked them all over before carrying them to her cave. There she fed them with her own milk.

Soon the mother Wolf heard tap-tap-tap on the fig tree outside and a Woodpecker flew down and said, "What have you got in your cave?"

"I have two cubs," answered the Wolf.

"They are not wolf cubs; they are human babies," said the Woodpecker. "They are the sons of the god Mars. He has sent me to help feed his twins."

"Are you going to take the baby cubs away from me?" cried the mother Wolf.

"Oh, no," said the Woodpecker. "It is the command of Mars that you give them milk so that they may become strong. Mars himself will teach them to be brave and warlike. I will feed them fruit and berries from the forest and teach them how to destroy their enemies." And so the mother Wolf, the Woodpecker and the twins lived happily together.

There was a shepherd named Faustulus who hated wolves because they ate his sheep and one day he followed the mother Wolf to kill her. When he saw her go into the cave and feed the twins with her milk, he was astonished. Faustulus hid himself until the mother Wolf had gone. Then he took the twins home. His wife was pleased. She nursed them with her other children and they called the twins Romulus and Remus.

Romulus and Remus grew to manhood in the home of the shepherd. As children they were noted for their strength and beauty. In their youth they were brave and fearless and as men they destroyed their enemies. Romulus lived to found the city of Rome.

But the Wolf and the Woodpecker were left sad and lonely and to this day the Wolf goes to and fro seeking her baby cubs crying, "Wow-ow-ow-ow! Wow-ow-ow-ow!" And the Woodpecker taps every tree to find the sons of Mars.

THE HEAD AND TAIL OF THE SNAKE

Liguria

Italy is too long a country. The head and tail can never touch; or, if they are forced to it, the head will bite the tail.—RENÉ BAZIN.

Once upon a time there was a great big snake that went creeping along, creeping along, and the head of the snake was very proud and despised the tail and made it follow after. But the tail was unhappy because he always had to follow after the head, bumping along, bumping along, and he said:

"Mr. Head, if you will let me lead I will show you where there are nice fat frogs to eat."

And the proud head replied, "How is it possible when you have no eyes to see with?"

Then the tail said, "If you will let me lead, I will keep you out of danger."

And the proud head hissed, "How can you do this when you have no forked tongue to thrust out to find where danger lies?"

Then the tail said, "If you will let me lead I will show you how to creep faster."

And the proud head answered, "You have no brains to think with, or you would know that if we crept faster harm might befall us."

At this the tail became very angry and shouted, "Just because you have eyes to see with and a tongue to thrust out and brains to think with, you keep me a slave. I will no longer endure it!"

And the tail slashed around and thrashed around so furiously that the head could hardly see, or thrust out its tongue, or think. So he cried, "Very well, Mr. Tail, if you think you can get along without eyes to see, or a tongue to thrust out, or brains to think with, I will let you lead," and he turned around and let the tail go first.

The tail was very happy and immediately began creeping along, creeping along and the head came after, bumping along, bumping along. But because the tail had no eyes to see with, he plunged right into a mud-puddle! He wallowed around and groped around but he could not get out of the mud until the head helped him, and then as they went creeping along, creeping along, the head laughed and said, "I told you that you could not lead without eyes to see with."

At this very moment the tail ran right into a man walking along on the path. The man raised his stick and would have killed the snake if the head had not thrust out his forked tongue so fast that the man was frightened and ran away.

"Aha!" laughed the head. "I told you that you would run into danger if you had no tongue to thrust out."

Once more the tail went creeping along, creeping along, into the forest. He came to a great fire and as the warmth felt good he crept right into the blaze. All the time the head kept hissing, "Turn around, turn around and I will save you." But of course the tail only wriggled further into the red bed of coals and the whole snake was burned up just because neither head nor tail would mind what the other said.

The Eye

It is no cat, but it wears hair;
It is no mirror, but it reflects;
It rains at any moment, but is not a cloud.

THE PUSSY MONKS

Piedmont

Once upon a time there was a little white church up on a hill and on this church there was a little white tower in which hung three little bells that rang, ting-a-ling, ting-a-ling, ting-a-ling!

Nearby was a little white house where lived the Pussy Monks. They were dear little white kittens dressed in brown coats and hoods and they were just as good as good could be.

One day the three silver bells rang, ting-a-ling, ting-a-ling, ting-a-ling! so loud and merrily that all the Pussy Monks came running to see what was the matter.

The Pussy Abbot said, "Tomorrow is feast day. If you can get a big, round cheese and some yellow cream and plenty of fish we will have a good dinner."

So the Pussy Monks rushed off, waving their long tails, to get the feast

ready. First they bought a big, round cheese and began rolling it up the hill, but half way up they got so tired they could not roll it any further and they felt very sad.

Just then a little girl came along and said, "Pussy Monks, I will help you." And she rolled the cheese up the hill to the Pussy Abbot. He said, "Thank you, good little girl."

Then the Pussy Monks started off to get the yellow cream but they could only find a red cow and they said, "How can a red cow give yellow cream?"

But the little girl said, "I will show you!" And she sat down on a stool and milked a pail full of yellow cream and carried it up to the Pussy Abbot and he said, "Thank you, good little girl!"

After that the Pussy Monks rushed off to the river to catch the fish, but the fish only nipped their little paws—and they could not catch a single one. So the little girl said, "I will get you some." She took a net and scooped up plenty of fish and carried them up the hill to the Pussy Abbot and he said, "Thank you, good little girl."

But when everything was in the kitchen, the Pussy Abbot stood and scratched his head and said, "I do not know how to light the fire!"

"Let me do it," said the little girl and she cooked the fish and put the big round cheese and the cream on the table and the Pussy Monks sat down to the feast and ate everything up.

When the little girl had washed the dishes, polished all the pots and kettles, cleaned the kitchen and made everything tidy, she said, "Good night, dear little Pussy Monks," and started down the hill.

"Wait, little girl," said the Pussy Abbot. "Because you are so good and kind, I wish to make you a present. Take this cord from my waist and tie it to the three silver bells. When you pull the cord, the bells will sing, ting-a-ling, ting-a-ling, ting-a-ling! When

you hear the bells you must pray for the thing you wish for most and you shall have it."

So the little girl did as the Pussy Abbot told her and she prayed that she might become a queen. Instantly she stood in a dress of silver, with a golden crown on her head. And this is the reason why Italy has only good queens.

The Week

Monday told Tuesday to ask Wednesday
Whether Thursday had told Friday
To warn Saturday that Sunday
Was a feast day.

KING BELIEVE AND PEASANT TRUTH

Sicily

Once upon a time there was a Peasant called Truth who took care of the goat, the ram and the lamb of King Believe. Every Saturday when Peasant Truth came to the palace, King Believe asked,

"How is my goat?"

"The goat is beautiful, Your Majesty," replied Peasant Truth.

"And how is my ram?"

"Your ram is beautiful to see."

"And how is my lamb?"

"Your lamb is beautiful to be!" And King Believe was so pleased that he gave Peasant Truth a few pieces of silver.

A courtier, named Count Envy, wanted to win the favor of King Believe. One Sunday Count Envy said, "Your Majesty, have you lately seen the goat, the

ram and the lamb? How do you know that they are as beautiful as your servant says."

"Because Peasant Truth will not tell me a lie!" replied King Believe.

"I will wager my falcons that he will tell you a lie when he comes next Saturday," said Count Envy.

King Believe answered, "I will not wager falcons, I will wager my head against yours that he will not tell me a lie!"

That night Count Envy lay awake trying to think of some way to make Peasant Truth tell a lie.

On Monday he thought and thought but his head was as empty as a dried gourd. On Tuesday his wife, the Countess False, said,

"My Lord, you neither eat nor sleep; does Dame Trouble walk by your side?"

"Be silent! That busy woman, Dame Trouble, may hear your foolish words!" snarled Count Envy, for by this time he was as cross as the fire tongs.

Wednesday passed. Although Count Envy thought and thought he could find no way to make Peasant Truth tell a lie.

On Thursday he was obliged to tell his wife of the King's wager.

"Oh, is that all," laughed Countess False. "Just leave the whole matter to me. I will take care of Peasant Truth."

Friday she put on a beautiful robe and wove a circlet of diamonds through her shining black air. She mounted a snow white horse and went secretly to the mountain where Peasant Truth lived.

When he saw this vision of loveliness he was astonished.

Countess False sprang from her white horse as lightly as a feather falls to the ground. With an enchanting smile she said,

"Good Peasant Truth, I have come from the city to ask you a favor."

"Beautiful lady, you need but ask and your wish will be granted."

Then Countess False said, "I have a great longing to taste the lamb beautiful to be."

"Ask anything but that, Lovely Vision; the lamb belongs to the King, and I cannot kill it!" exclaimed Peasant Truth.

"Ah, woe is me! I die because you will not give me one taste of the lamb beautiful to be!" And the Countess False fell swooning at his feet.

The simple peasant was frightened. He stooped beside her, crying,

"Flower of beauty, do not die; open your heavenly eyes!"

Now the Countess False was not really fainting; she was only pretending. She peeked out of one eye and saw Peasant Truth looking very sad and she whispered faintly, "Unless I taste the meat of the lamb beautiful to be, I shall die!"

Peasant Truth could resist no longer. He killed the lamb and roasted a piece which the Countess False ate.

"Thank you, good Peasant Truth," said she. "You have saved my life. But I fear that harm will come to you if you tell the King you have killed the lamb beautiful to be. I warn you to keep that a secret between us and I will

bring you a purse of gold." She joyfully went her way; for now she was sure that her husband would win the wager.

Peasant Truth was greatly troubled over what he had done. He tried to think of something to tell King Believe. Could he say that the lamb had fallen down the cliff? No; for that was not true. Could he say that a wolf had carried it away? No; for that was not true.

When White Lie whispered in his ear, "Tell King Believe that the lamb is dead."

But Speak-The-Truth whispered *such a pleasant thing* in his other ear that Peasant Truth hurried to the city to see King Believe.

When he entered the great hall of the castle the whole court was waiting. They were anxious to know how the wager would be decided.

"Good evening, Peasant Truth," said King Believe. "How is my goat?"

"Your goat is beautiful."

"How is my ram?"

"Your ram is beautiful to see."

"And how is my lamb?"

Peasant Truth stepped forward, saying the pleasant thing that Speak-The-Truth had whispered in his ear, "Gracious King,

I killed your lamb beautiful to be
For a woman, beautiful to see.
Tempted by her beauty
I forgot my duty.
But Truth is far more beautiful to me!"

When he had finished the courtiers and ladies clapped their hands for joy. Peasant Truth was surprised when King Believe stepped down from the throne and filled his hands with gold.

So Count Envy lost his wager. His head was cut off and his wife, the Countess False, was driven from the Court. But King Believe and Peasant Truth have lived forever in the hearts of every man, woman and child in the whole world.

THE END

Eau Claire State Teachers College

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De 24 '38	Mar 24 '42	May 6 '59	JAN 17 '71
Ja13'39	Feb 9 '43	Nov 22'60	
[illegible]39	May 2 '45	May 8	
Ap 20 '39	[illegible] 45	JUL 27 '64	
No 7'40	[illegible]	DEC 8 '64	
No 28'40	De 8'48	JAN 4 '65	
No 28'40	De 8'48	APR 20 '65	
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No 28'40	Ja6'50	JUL 12 '66 7 '68	
No 28'40	A 24'50	MAY 3 '67	
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